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ABSTRACT

This paper describes the experiences of an American teacher who taught English to individuals in Bene, Haiti for 10 days in the summer of 1993. The paper describes preparation for the teaching experience, discusses the experience itself, and offers a social and educational analysis of the experience. The paper discusses living conditions, transportation arrangements, the language barrier, Voodoo practices, physical expression in the Haitians' native language of Creole, fatalism, poor public health conditions, and Haitians' interest in American culture. Taking the view that the foundation for learning is set in the community, the teacher worked with the entire community of Bene, not just the children. Students included school-aged children and adults. The teaching approach emphasized that learning should be experiential, rely upon cultural strengths, and build upon the learner's prior knowledge and ability. The curriculum covered the English alphabet, introductions, body parts, telling time, days of the week, months of the year, expressions of time, verbs, American lifestyles, songs, Charades, and card games. The vocabulary and songs covered in the 10-day curriculum are appended. (JDD)

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TEACHING IN BENE, HAITI:

ONE TEACHER'S GUIDE TO EDUCATION IN A FOREIGN COUNTRY

ED 380 450

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Embarking on the Journey

For the twelve-day period of June 15-26, 1993, I taught English effectively to the community of Bene, Haiti by maximizing their interests and cultural strengths to enable them to feel confident without sacrificing their success at learning English. This paper details the preparation for the experience of teaching in Bene, the story of the experience itself, and the broader social and educational analysis of the experience. To achieve my goal, I studied educational theories and the history of Haiti. I relied heavily on my own prior educational experience and prior visits to Haiti. I am currently a graduate student in International Relations with an undergraduate degree in Elementary Education. I first came to be interested in Haiti through a course that I was taking at Webster University entitled, History of Haiti. The professor of the course heads a non-for-profit organization called *People to People* that coordinates educational and developmental projects in Haiti. When I was twenty, I traveled to Haiti with *People to People* on a one-month work trip. During this time I polished my *Kreyol*, worked in Mother Theresa's Children's Home, and studied Haitian dance and culture. A little over a year later, in the summer of 1993, is when I decided to return to Haiti to work on an individual, volunteer basis. Upon my return to Haiti, I once again realized how the Haitian people could enrich my life and give to me more than I could ever give to them. Bene is extremely remote and living conditions

are primitive as compared to most of the First World's standard of living. Thus, the majority of villagers had little or no education. I wanted to discover the best way to capture their interests which was fairly simple to do, since Haitians in general are fascinated with the culture of the United States. The other problems I needed to address in order to provide effective instruction were the medical conditions of the villagers, the living conditions of the villagers (which are related to the political and economic situation), and the fact that most of the villagers could not read or write Creole.

On Tuesday, June 15, I left the guest house where I was staying in Haiti's capital, Port au Prince, at about 4:30 a.m. This was necessary in order to beat the morning rush to the busses. Because of the United States' economic embargo of Haiti, machine parts were scarce and gasoline was expensive. Thus, good transportation was always in demand and difficult to find. I walked the mile to one of the main roads where I took a tap tap to the bus depot. Tap taps are Haiti's most common form of public transportation. They are pick-up trucks with two benches in the back and a wooden roof over the passengers. Tap taps, along with houses and all other common structures, are painted in many bright colors. I arrived at the dirty, chaotic bus depot at 6:30 a.m. and proceeded to look for a bus to Blokos. Unlike the United States, Port au Prince's bus station was totally disorganized. There were few signs on the buses and the ones that did

have signs were often bound for another destination than where the sign denoted. Seeing my white skin, many chauffeurs and their assistants tried to corral me into their busses so they could charge me extra.

The bus depot was also a marketplace. Banana chips fried in five year old oil, gum, and washcloths were thrust in my face. As usual for Haiti, everything is piled on top of everything else. From the perspective of someone from the First world, it appears as though simple things *have* to be done in the most difficult, time-consuming, and chaotic way. This is one of the things that drives me crazy about the Haitians. From my perspective, it appears that if there is no immediate crisis, one must be invented. That's just the way life seems to me in Haiti. Maybe it is due to the fact that the Haitians have suffered and been oppressed for so long that they cannot function without strife.

Living Conditions in Haiti

A bus to Blokos had not yet arrived so I looked for a soda. I passed a woman rinsing the mud off her feet in the endless flow of sewer water in the gutter that caused the city to constantly smell putrid. In the same gutter, I passed a woman squatting down to relieve herself amidst all the commotion (only rich people have toilets). A man working underneath a car threw the empty, plastic oil container in the same gutter as another man bent down to scoop a handful of the gutter water to drink. This man

did not have one American penny with which to purchase a cup of cold, bottled water. I spotted three men standing next to an oversized cooler. I approached them and ordered a "koka". One man charged me a dime extra and I continued to hold out my hand for the dime. We argued for five minutes while I drank my soda and he finally gave in, convinced that I knew what the real price was. The crowd we had been entertaining dispersed. Scams are generally accepted in Haiti, because they blame the victim for being unable to protect himself from the scam. The man handed me the usual odd mixture of Haitian and American coins, displaying the deep infiltration of American culture, economics, and politics left over from the Haitian occupation by the United States in the early twentieth century. The occupatin lasted twenty years, from 1915-1935 (Bentivegna, 1991).

The Bus

I left to check on the Blokos bus. I sat down on a metal rail until the bus arrived. By that time, everyone in the general vicinity seemed to know that the "blank", or the white foreigner, was waiting for the Blokos bus. So when it arrived, multitudes of people prodded me toward the bus. I pushed my way to a back corner of the bus. Relieved to have a seat and a window, I quickly shoved my backpack under the seat and held my other bag in my lap to allow room for the rest of the loading passengers to load themselves, their varied and voluminous luggage, and their chickens

into the bus. Goats were tied upside-down with their legs bound together on the outside of the bus. More bags were tied on top, as well as a few more bodies. Bus drivers in Haiti *always* have to hurriedly cram everyone in and then sit around for apparently no reason for at least an hour. During this long waiting period my feet began to fall asleep because my legs were being pressed in between the side of the bus and the man next to me. Heating the bus like an oven, the sun also shone on my left arm that had to dangle out the window due to the lack of a better place to put it. Also during this time, the chauffeur tried to allow more passengers to board. He instructed everyone that we must sit five across a seat instead of four. With those words, a riot broke out among those already seated. the man next to me shouted, "Moun pa bet!" ("People aren't animals!"). Passengers argued with the driver for a good ten minutes until he finally gave in, although his discontent was obvious. Vendors brandished goods through the windows of the bus, hoping to make a sale to those inside who were rich because they could afford the bus ticket.

Already frustrated, uncomfortable, and anxious, I was glad when the bus finally left the depot. We drove through anarchic traffic on roads that had not been repaired since the 1970s when Francois Duvalier, or Papa Doc, had ultimate control over the country (Corbett, 1991). We drove on into the mountains where the population was less dense, but the effects of deforestation were obvious on the bones of the hills that were once

tropical rainforests. Inhabitable land in the mountains was scarce and poverty was just as severe as in the cities, only there were no doctors for those in the mountains.

After three hours of racing on sharp curves, we arrived at a river with a small market on the other side. The bus could not drive over the river so everyone had to get out and wade across with their belongings. The swift water forced us to walk sideways, while facing the current. Once on the opposite bank, I presumed we were in Blokos' marketplace. It was then that I found out that we had to take another truck to get to Blokos. I ate fried plantains and talked about English grammar with two men for about an hour until the truck arrived. The mad rush for a seat began. But the industrial-sized truck was already full of peasants, chickens, produce, baskets, bags of grain, etc. There were no seats, just people and things piled on top of each other. I had to sit on one of the high sides of the truck with only a rope stretched across the opening to hang on to. The road was comprised mostly of dirt and rock.

The Relationship Between the Political and Economic Situation

Many Haitians are well aware of world politics because they are at the bottom of the barrel and they bear the brunt of many world decisions. A young man on the truck wanted to know why newly-elected American President, Bill Clinton's policies toward Haiti were not consistent with his

foreign policies elsewhere, and did I think he would end the embargo. I responded as thoughtfully as I could, while ducking from the overhanging branches and bouncing uncomfortably from the turbulent drive. Trying to avoid discussing politics without seeming uncaring, I concluded that I wished he were more consistent, but that I really had no idea what Clinton's views on the embargo were. The young man appeared angry, and rightfully so, but also appeared willing to differentiate between my government and me. I was desperately trying not to allow my dangling feet to be jarred into kicking the head of the old woman sitting below me. She felt something and reached under the chicken in her lap to pull out a precious egg.

From Blokos to Bene: Destruction of the Rainforest

Upon arrival in Blokos, I connected with my guide Edzair Mouscardy. Edzair sent someone to bring horses. The unsettling ride had irritated my intestinal problems so I laid down in the back room of the Post Office until the horses arrived. They gave me a malnourished horse to ride. The mare had a baby colt that was still nursing on top of the mountain, and was therefore anxious and extremely persistent. I could hardly control her or slow her down. I felt sorry for the mare that had no shoes and had to walk on the rocky road. I would rather have walked, but my hosts were trying to be hospitable. At dusk we turned off the road, met up with six

villagers from Bene, and began our ascent straight up the mountain to Bene.

Rain began to fall as the last bits of light bled from the sky. The ascent sharpened quickly and the anxious mare led the group by plopping through the mud and crunching her hooves down hard on rocks. She apparently knew where she was headed. In spite of the frequency of houses and tracts of land, I felt the barrenness of the naked mountain and its once magnificent life that had been razed.

Living Style

Once on top of the mountain, we stopped into the first cement house that we came upon. The old woman and man greeted us enthusiastically and invited us in to get warm and dry because it was freezing outside. The two-room cement house was similar to most other houses in Bene because of its structure and decor. The two rooms were proportionate in size and the house had a low tin roof. The outside was painted in bright blues, yellows, greens, reds, and white. Three-foot hearts, diamonds, and other designs were painted on the outside of the house. The floor was hard dirt. This was the coolest I had ever been in Haiti. In fact, it was quite cool at night in Bene. We ate rice and beans. The old woman appeared hurt that I wouldn't eat the best piece of meat which was a small slab of hog meat with about two inches of fat and with the bristles still attached. I told

them I was a vegetarian (which they could not fathom) so they would not be offended. I slept on the bed in the back room while a young woman and her newborn slept on the floor and the older couple slept in the front room. The young woman refused to sleep in the bed with me, even after I insisted.

In the morning I went out to use the toilet which turned out to be a hole in the ground surrounded by rocks. I passed a woman with a goiter on her neck the size of a grapefruit. Later, when I got back to Port au Prince, I learned that the treatment for the painful goiter was simply to ingest iodized salt, to which Bene had little access (Werner, 1992). On my way back from the toilet, I slipped and fell on the red earth that was so commonplace in Bene. Even the water in Bene on top of the mountain was too contaminated to drink or wash with. The villagers had built cisterns that were connected to their houses with tin gutters. They collected the rain water that ran off their roofs and into the cisterns. They treated it with Clorox so that they could have safe water to drink. In spite of the hardships, Bene seemed relatively self-sufficeint.

Preparing For My First Day Teaching: The Community-Centered Approach

In my original negotiations with Edzair over the phone, I stated that I wanted to work with the entire community of Bene, not just the

children. In one of my favorite books regarding the place of education in society, Teaching as a Subversive Activity, the author proposes that a strong community is the necessary base from which effective education stems (Postman, 1969). I truly support this idea; and I know that if all community members felt included in English lessons, the entire community would be more apt to practice it. I wanted parents and children to be able to go home together, work together, and speak English together. In this way, learning English would become much more a part of their community, instead of just a pen-and-paper school subject. My experience teaching Adult Basic Education in the inner city of St. Louis has proven, in my mind, this theory that the foundation for learning is set in the community.

The First Day Teaching

On the hour walk to the Christian church, I peered down into the mountain gorge and realized that I was looking *down* on clouds. We passed over the highest peak on the mountain. The church was the largest structure in the village. Made of wood, the one-story building consisted of only one long, rectangular room. The local schoolteacher carried a chalkboard about a mile over the mountainous terrain everyday to bring it to the church. My students began arriving and we started on time at about ten o'clock. They all filed in very formally and sat down on the backless wooden benches. In their experiences, school has always been formal. They dressed in their better clothes and stood up to ask questions. That

first day, I faced about sixty pupils, although attendance slacked off on other days due to market days and family responsibilities. Most of the students were elementary school-aged, but a good number of high school-aged children, and even a few adults came to learn English in the church.

The Language Barrier

Since Creole had been declared the official language of Haiti as late as the 1950s, textbooks were not written in Creole. They were written in French, the former national language of Haiti. Although 100% of Haitians speak Creole and only 2-5% speak French, French is still taught in all schools throughout Haiti. This is evidence of the post-colonial grip on Haiti that most Haitians still struggle to overcome. So, one of my greatest challenges would be to teach English to this multi-aged group of Haitians who spoke Creole, but could not write it, and who could write French, but really not speak it. Since I knew only Creole and little French, my written English lessons were often Creole lessons to them as well. My students often laughed at, but were intrigued with, the phonetic spellings of "Kreyol". They were shocked to see a white person taking pride in teaching Creole- because everything in their culture puts down blacks and holds up whites; says that Creole is an inferior language and French is supreme; puts down Voodoo, but emphasizes Catholicism; describes African as dirty, but portrays French or American as the best way to be. They did

comprehend the written Creole even though this may have been the first time they had seen it written.

The Voodoo Nation

The preacher started with a prayer and a moment of silence. Although the community claimed to be Christian, they all practiced Voodoo beliefs in their everyday lives. The Voodoo that they practice in Haiti is a conglomeration of African religions and French Catholicism (Corbett, 1991). Approximately 100% of Haitians believe in Voodoo, as it is part of their culture and heritage, but only about twenty percent practice Catholicism (Corbett, 1991). However, peasants sometimes attend churches to receive food, medicine, or schooling from missionaries. Haiti is founded on Voodoo, much as the United States is grounded in Christianity (Corbett, 1991). Haitians still participate in practices that have their roots in Voodoo, such as the burying of a baby's umbilical cord in their yard to promote prosperity.

After the prayer, I introduced myself thoroughly. I told the listeners my name, age, and that I was a student. I told them why I wanted to teach English in Bene - which is because I aspire to be a teacher and also because they asked me to. I would never have come to Bene and imposed English on the villagers because "it was the right thing to do", or because "it would help them so much", without their request. One of Piaget's theories

explains that individuals must be allowed to make connections themselves and also that learning is driven by a personal motivation to learn (Piaget, 1976). I told them that as they learned English, to begin to ask all questions in English. I explained that I would be talking a lot about "American" culture and what life was like in the United States which sparked their interest because most Haitians are curiously obsessed with the United States. It is rare to find a Haitian that, if given the opportunity to go to the United States, would opt to stay in her homeland. I told them that the English alphabet is the same as the French or Creole alphabet in that it has twenty-six letters that can be written in cursive or print. We practiced the pronunciation of the alphabet in English and moved on through the rest of the first day's curriculum. On this first day, the students learned how to say all of the introductory types of things such as, "Hello!", "How are you?", "My name is...", etc. The first day's homework was to practice these introductions.

The Second Day: Applying Educational Theory to Practice

In fact, we started out everyday with those same introductions. If the students ever wanted to speak English with someone, they must learn to be good greeters! On the second day, after introductions, we learned body parts. I felt that this would be appropriate and interesting in Haiti because many Haitians are sick a lot. They had poor sanitation and lacked

any modern medicine. I had always heard Haitians talk about all of their pains and sicknesses. Now they could practice their usual conversations in English. Pain and sickness is so commonplace throughout Haiti, that it has become part of the culture to expect it (although the Haitians never get used to it). We learned the names of numbers from 0-1,000,000, times of the day, how to tell time, and the names of face cards. Many Haitians play dominoes or cards for fun, and one is considered clever if he knows a lot of card tricks. During the last two hours of class I explained how to play the card game "Go Fish". It is easy to see the personification of Anansi, the tricky, folkloric African spider (McDermott, 1972), in the character of many Haitian men. I felt that teaching them English through a card game would be a fun and non-intimidating way of providing them with an environment conducive to learning English. It also relied on their cultural strengths and interests in order to help them feel more comfortable and be more successful. They had to ask in English: "Do you have any...(the number or face)?"; and respond: "Yes", "No", or "Go fish!" The homework was to play a few games of "Go Fish" that night.

The Third and Fourth Day: Expressions of Culture

On days three and four, the students learned the days of the week, the months of the year, the Haitian and American seasons, and some phrases. Being a tropical climate, Haiti has only two seasons: hot season and rainy season.

Another trademark of Haitian culture is how physically expressive Creole is. Since Creole cannot express very deep, intellectual conversation unless it is supplemented with French, the Haitians have developed their physical movements, facial expressions, and voice intonations in order to communicate more subtle nuances. For instance, in Creole, the word for like or love is "renmen". In English we have many different words to express this sentiment such as: adore, love, like, etc. Since Creole has only one word to mean all of these things, how the Haitians say the word, or gestures they make while speaking will make it clear how it is intended. If a woman *adores* (renmen) her new baby, she might clutch her hands to her heart. But if she just *likes* (renmen) Coca Cola, she will merely say it matter-of-factly. Because of the physical expressiveness, I knew that the students would like to sing songs. I asked them if they wanted to learn to sing a song in English, and the overwhelming response was "Yes!" So we learned "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star".

Fatalism in Haiti

After the first night in Bene, I was moved to Maxim's house. His family's house was the familiar two-roomed structure. The front room contained a table, chairs, and cabinets. The back room held a full bed and a twin bed. Maxim and his wife gave the big bed to Edzair and myself (they insisted) while they slept together on the twin bed. This really upset

me since Maxim's wife was nine months pregnant. They had their three young children sleep on mats on the floor. Women in Haiti generally have many children; sometimes fifteen to twenty. However, well over fifty percent of children in Haiti die before the age of five (Bentivegna, introduction). Foreigners would often ask why they continued to have so many children. I believe it is due to two reasons: the fatalism of most Haitians perpetuated by oppression and Voodoo, and children are the best form of social security. Since most Haitians have long been victims of oppression by their government and foreign governments, it only seems valid that they still feel helpless. Also, Voodoo is a religion that promotes this helplessness (one could argue the same of Catholicism), much as some forms of Christianity promote predestiny. The people will not use condoms to prevent pregnancy, AIDS, and other STDs because they feel that it is unnatural and it might go against one of the gods. I began to realize that foreigners and others unfamiliar to Haiti's culture could not just propagate scientific reasoning to the Haitians and expect it to work. First of all, I consider that to be a rude intrusion of another culture. Secondly, it is useless. The only way for conditions for these women and their families to get better is to help them provide for their basic needs. If women had food, water, shelter, education, and social security they probably would not opt to bear fifteen children. Once these needs are met, they may be able to challenge the functionality of their own religion and culture. This is why I

wanted to teach them when they requested someone.

Day Five: The Correlation Between Lack of Nutrition and Learning

The school sessions lasted three to five hours and started at 10:00. The fifth day of lessons was on a Sunday, and so class had to wait to commence until noon when church got out. Students learned some more phrases. I explained what family life and religion were like in the United States. The villagers were mesmerized. I also talked about what an average day in the life of a person living in the United States might be like. When I talked about the kind of food that most North Americans eat each day, the Haitians laughed and scoffed; but mostly they found it ridiculous that people might eat meat three times a day- and eat so much! The average Haitian eats once every other day (Bentivegna, 1991). Of course, it is easy to speculate how malnutrition works against one's ability to learn.

After class, we had to pay a protocol visit to the minister and his wife, who was sick and dying. Of course, it was a status symbol to have a white "American" teacher visit your house. And I was also expected to *make a donation* to the "Holy House". I was very ill that day, and I think I upset everyone when I fainted while paying my sympathies to the minister's wife. I guess that the surrounding people thought that a spirit had mounted me, because later, after I regained consciousness, I tried to

give a pack of cards to a small child in the room, but he was terrified of me and would not come near me. No one would come near me. I figured out that the whole situation seemed extremely important to them, but no one tried to help me at all because they were frightened. I needed to get some sugar in my blood, but I did not get any. As a result, I was weak for the rest of the day. Being a healthy individual, and getting sick after only five days, I admired the strength and perseverance of my students- who came to class most everyday in spite of their malnutrition.

Overcoming Lack of Medical Care

On the way back to Maxim's is when I met Marianne. She was throwing rocks at men, women, and children on the path. The moment she saw me, she began smiling and mocking me. The others with me told me she was crazy. She had survived the typhoid fever that was running rampant in the hills, but had come out of it violent and insane. She held a frying pan in one of her hands with which she often threatened to hit people. Most people were laughing at her, but standing back. Her husband stood by her, pleading with her to stop with sad eyes. It only encouraged her and she lifted up her shirt to expose her nude breasts, and everyone laughed. Marianne liked me a lot and began to follow me around a lot of the time. She would sit in the window of the church during lessons and make funny comments, mock me, or do sultry dances in the back of the

room. These sorts of tragedies were just a part of life to the villagers of Bene who had no access to vaccinations or medical care.

Day Six

I taught verbs and simple verb conjugation on the sixth day. The older school-aged children caught on very quickly since they already knew how to conjugate in French. A man asked me to teach him a song. He hummed, "Jesus Loves Me, This I Know", and so I taught it to the class. That must have been one of those songs that everybody knew the tune to, but not the words - sort of like "Le Cocaracha" in the United States.

The Seventh Day: Market Day

On the seventh day, some of the older class members and those in responsible family positions were absent from class, because Tuesday was the weekly market day in Blokos. Maxim's wife walked barefoot all those miles (at least five to ten) through the mountains to Blokos and back, carrying probably fifty pounds of goods on her head while she was nine-months pregnant! And she was probably very sick and suffering. Anyway, I taught more verbs. I introduced the game of "Charades" (my adapted version) to the students. They were to draw a card from the bag. On one side, it had a word in Creole, and on the other side, one in English. Then they acted the word out while members of the audience guessed, in

Creole, what the word was. When someone guessed correctly, the actress would then write the Creole word on the chalkboard and its English translation. We played for hours and had lots of fun. Haitians like to act things out, as they are, in general, natural hams. This was another way in which I maximized their interests and cultural strengths to accelerate learning. From that day forward, we played Charades everyday after the curriculum was finished.

Days Eight and Nine: Checking Comprehension

I started off day eight with a discussion of the educational system in the United States. I talked about grades, class structure, and curriculum. As usual, the students were entranced with the study of the different culture and posed many thoughtful questions. We also learned names of colors and clothing. We concluded with Charades. On the ninth day, after practicing the everyday introductions, I spoke of the many different laws in the United States. I compared them to many similar and not so similar laws that Haiti has. But of course, the only law that Haitians really know is the law of the gun. Haiti's laws are not enforced for most of the population and I do not think the peasants even know what the laws are. My pupils were amazed that the United States had so many laws. They did not understand how we could function with so many. For instance, the United States' law that an individual must be at least sixteen years of age in order

to drive seemed obnoxious to them. In their eyes, anyone that is rich enough to own an automobile would drive it whenever and however they wanted, and just monetarily bribe their way out of any problems. By this time, I could speak slowly in English some of the time and the students would understand the gist of the message. I knew that they comprehended because of the questions they posed after I would briefly discuss something in English. Of course, I had no way of individually evaluating the students because we had so little time and few resources like paper, pencils, and cards. I tried to have the students evaluate themselves at home by practicing together and quizzing each other, but I had no real way of checking in with them because there were so many students and so little time. I would always reiterate in Creole what I said in English. Speaking in English reinforced what they had already learned. They loved to study and synthesize questions In English for me to respond to, especially the young men. I think they just wanted to hear me talk about my personal life. A few of the questions I received were: "Do you have a boyfriend?", "Would you like to dance with me?", and "What do you like to eat?" I vowed to answer <u>any</u> question they asked in English.

<u>The Party</u>

On Friday, the last day, the school children said they had prepared a surprise for me at the schoolhouse. So instead of meeting in the church, I

walked about two miles to the school. The children had choreographed an entire show for my benefit. The dramatic presentation included traditional dancing and singing that involved cultural storytelling. I almost cried out of gratitude and because they were so beautiful. After the presentation, a party was thrown in my honor about one-half mile away in a small, one-roomed, white, concrete house. Four men played beautifully crafted drums and stringed instruments while all of us crammed into the room to dance to the mesmerizing African rhythms. Clairin, rotgut Haitian rum made from fermented sugar cane, was sold in dirty used bottles for about ten cents a bottle. Everyone danced in that small room, pressing our bodies together to make room, with bottles of clairin draped over each others backs. it was one of the best parties I had ever been to and I did not want to leave, but we had to start the long walk home before it got too dark.

Conclusion: The Learning Exchange

I used my experience teaching in Bene as an opportunity to apply the previously learned educational theories that learning should be *experiential* (learn by doing), should rely upon cultural strengths, and build upon the learner's prior knowledge and ability. When I put these ideas into practice, I found that the students' comprehension soared and they were able to retain the knowledge and build upon it. Seeing that the strategy was effective has proven, in my mind, this method of teaching.

For a while I had forgotten the desolate and problematic conditions of existing in the Third World. On the long walk home, I realized that these people had taught me so much more than I could have ever taught them. They had shown me what life is really all about. When they had nothing- no money, no food, no health care- they still had their bodies, souls, and families. They made the best of everything; they had to. And they *had* to persist- just to exist. I remembered how much I had to be thankful for at home in St. Louis and I knew a part of me would always remember to be thankful and to persist and exist. Teachers can and do learn from students, and this is the ultimate example.

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Day 1

-everyday introductions:

Bonjou/Bonswa	Good morning/Good evening/Hello
Ki jan ou ye?/Koman ou ye?	How are you?
M' pa pi mal.	I'm not so bad.
M' la.	I'm ok.
M' ap boule.	I'm burning/going/rolling.
Byen anpil.	Very well.
En fom!	The greatest!
E ou menm? Ki jan ou ye?	And you? How are you?
Ki jan ou rele?	What is your name?
M' rele Rio, e ou menm?	I'm Rio, and you?
E li? Ki jan li rele?	And him? What is his name? (her)
Li se Mari, se mwen.	She is Mary, my sister.
Li rele Steve, menaj mwen.	He is Steve, my boyfriend.
Ki laj ou?	How old are you?
M' genyen 22 an.	I'm 22 years old.
Ki relijyon ou ye?	What is your religion?

M' pa kompran.	I don't understand.
M' kompran.	I understand.
M' pa konnen.	I don't know.
M' genyen yon kesyon, tanpri.	I have a question, please.

Day 1 (cont.)

-practice English alphabet

pronunciation

-pronouns: I,you, he/she, we, them	**prenom yo: mwen,ou, li, nou, yo**

homework: practice introductions

Day 2

-introductions

Sa ou genyen?	**What's the trouble?**
Eske _____ ou fe ou mal?	**Does your _____ hurt?**
tet	**head**
je	**eyes**
zorey	**ear**
nen	**nose**
bouch	**mouth**
goj	**throat**
kou	**neck**
lestomak	**chest**
zepol	**shoulder**
do	**back**
senti do	**low back**
bra	**arm**
kod	**elbow**
men	**hand**
ponyet	**wrist**
dwet	**finger**

Day 2 (cont.)

kouis	thigh
jenou	knee
janm	leg
pye	foot
dwet pye	toe

-learn numbers 0 - 1,000,000

-learn times of day/how to tell time in English:

ine	one o'clock
deze	two o'clock
twaze	three o'clock
katre	four o'clock
senke	five o'clock
size	six o'clock
sete	seven o'clock
uite	eight o'clock
neve	nine o'clock
dize	ten o'clock
onze	eleven o'clock
midi	noon
minwi	midnight

-learn names of face cards:

Vale	Jack
Ren	Queen
Rwa	King

Day 2 (cont.)

Las	Ace
-learn how to play	
"Ale Peshe!"	"Go Fish!"
"Eske ou genyen kek...?"	"Do you have any...?"
"Wi."	"Yes."
"No, ale peshe!"	"No, go fish!"

homework: practice "Go Fish"

Day 3

-introductions

Ki jan ou di ...?	How do you say ...?
Ki sa li ye?	What is that?
Ki sa li rele?	What is that called?
Tanpri, repete.	Please, repeat.
Eska ou kapab ekri sa su tablo?	Could you write that on the board?
Nou pran repo.	We will take a break.
M'ap aprann Angle.	I am learning English.
Eske ou bezwin ed?	Do you need help?

Yon Semen:	Days of the Week:
Dimanch	Sunday
Lendi	Monday
Madi	Tuesday
Mekredi	Wednesday
Jedi	Thursday
Vandredi	Friday
Sandi	Saturday

Yon Ane Gen Doz Mwa:	Months of the Year:
Janvye	January
Fevriye	February
Mas	March
Avril	April
Me	May

Day 3 (cont.)

Jen	June
Jiye	July
Out	August
Septanm	September
Oktab	October
Novanm	November
Desanm	December

Yon Ane Gen Kat Sezon:	Seasons of the Year:
ive	winter
prentan	spring
ete	summer
oton	autumn/fall

Sezon Yo Ayityen:	Haiti's Seasons:
sezon chale	hot season
sezon lapli	rainy season

an passe	the past
jodia	today
ye	yesterday
demen	tomorrow
avanye	the day before
aswa	tonight
ye swa	last night

Day 3 (cont.)

maten	morning
nuit	night
ta	late
tan	time
ve	around
kek fwa	sometimes
bone	early
defwa	sometime
tanzantan	time to time
dimaten/apremedi	afternoon
kounye	now
jis	until
a menm tan	at the same time
toujou	always
avni	the future
a ki le ...	at what time ...
byen souvan	quite often
nan ane-a	in the year
janm/pa janm/poko janm	never
mwa-d	month of
segonn	second
minit	minute
le	hour
devwa: praktike shanson	homework: practice song

Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star
Briyante, Briyante, Ti Zetwal

Twinkle, twinkle,
Briyante, briyante,

little star,
ti zetwal,

how I wonder
ki jan m' mevey

what you are.
jan ou ye.

Way up in the sky so high,
ro anle nan syel telman wo,

like a diamond in the sky.
tankou yon diaman nan syel-la.

Twinkle, twinkle,
Briyante, briyante,

little star,
ti zetwal,

how I wonder
ki jan m' mevey

what you are.
jan ou ye.

Day 4

-introductions

Ki kote ou soti?	Where are you from?
M' soti Ayiti.	I'm from Haiti.
M' soti Etazini.	I'm from the United States.
E ou menm? Ki soti ou?	And you? Where are you from?
Ki kote ou rete?	Where do you live?
Mwen rete Etazini.	I live in the United States.
Nou rete nan Delmas 91.	We live at Delmas 91.
E ou menm?	And you?
M' abite isit.	I live here?
M' rete la.	I live there?
Ki kote ou prale?	Where are you going?
M' prale marche a.	I'm going to the market.
E ou menm? Kote ou prale?	And you? Where are you going?
M' prale Po-au-Priz.	I'm going to Port-au-Prince.
M' pap prale. M' rete isit.	I'm not going. I'm staying here.
Eska ou genyen timoun yo?	Do you have any children?
Wi, nou gen set timoun.	Yes, we have seven children.
No, m' pa gen timoun.	No, I don't have children.
Ki moun vini?	Who is coming?
Profese a.	The teacher.
Ki moun sa yo ye?	Who are those people?
Moun sa yo eleve yo.	They are the students.
Anpil moun vin.	Many people are coming.
Poukisa ou isit?	Why are you here?

Day 4 (cont.)

M' vin etidye Angle.	I come to study English.
M' renmen li isit.	I love it here.
M' pral aprann Angle pi bon.	I will learn English better.
devwa: praktike pale fras yo -Stay after class to learn how to pronounce your name in English.	homework: practice speaking phrases.

Day 5

-introductions

Sa w' ap fe?	What are you doing?
Pa gen pwoblem.	No problem.
Ki le li ye?	What time is it?
Ki le ...?	When ...
Ki jou jodia ye?	What day is it?
Ki jou ye te ye?	What day was yesterday?
M' vle bwe ...	I want to drink ...
M' ta renmen ...	I would like ...
Ki travay ou fe?	What do you do?
Pale pi dousman.	Speak more slowly.
Ou pale two vit.	You speak too fast.
Ki laj ou gen?	How old are you?
Konbyen li koute?	How much does that cost?
Konbyen?	How much?
Menm bagay ak	Same thing as
Pa menm bagay	Not the same thing
Si ou vle.	If you want.
devwa: Fe yon kesyon pou mande'm demen.	homework: Make a question to ask me tomorrow.

-discussed the average day in the life of a person living in the United States

-discussed family life and religion in the United States

Day 6

-introductions

Veb yo:	Verbs:
mete	to put
soufri	to suffer
vini (vin)	to come
pe	to be afraid
renmen	to like/love
lavi	to live
pale	to speak
reve	to dream
repete	to repeat
boule	to burn
we	to see
lave	to wash
rete	to dwell in
mennen	to take to
vle	to want
pota bay	to bring to
santi	to feel
desann	to go down
limen	to light
konstri	to build
domi	to sleep
fe	to make/to do
shita	to sit

Day 6 (cont.)

seche	to dry
pati	to leave/to go
rele	to scream
ale	to go
panse	to think
koute	to cost
ranje	to fix
tande	to listen
moulen	to grind
manyen	to touch
santi	to smell
montre	to point/to show
move	to be angry
bat	to beat
fache	to be angry
ka, kab, kapab	can
kouri	to run
met	may
Pinga!	Don't!
fek	have just
rive	to arrive
esplike	to explain
tann	to wait for
-mnde kesyon yo pou'm reponde	-ask questions and I will respond
devwa: praktike shanson	homework: practice song

Jesus Loves Me
Yesu Renmen Mwen

Jesus loves me,
Yesu renmen' m,

this I know.
sa m' konnen.

For the bible tells me so.
Pou bib-la di-m sa.

Little ones to him belong;
Timoun yo pou li posede;

they are weak, but he is strong.
yo feb, men li fo.

Yes, Jesus loves me.
Wi, Yesu renmen'm.

Yes, Jesus loves me.
Wi, Yesu renmen' m.

Yes, Jesus loves me;
Wi, Yesu renmen' m;

-the bible tells me so.
-bib-la di-m sa.

Day 7

-introductions

Veb yo:	Verbs:
monte	to go up/to mount
dako	to agree
sove	to save
vwayaje	to travel
achte	to buy
konte	to count
pedi	to lose
praktike	to practice
frape	to hit (with hand)
kouche	to go to bed
pran	to take
leve	to get up
bliye	to forget
femen	to close
kontan	to be happy
ouvri	to open
jete	to throw
kanpe	to stand
rale	to pull
etudye	to study
jwe	to play
pase	to happen
sonje	to remember

Day 7 (cont.)

jwenn	to find
sonje	to miss
touye	to kill
vann	to sell
bo	to kiss
tonbe	to fall
kriye	to cry
gen/genyen	to have
kuit	to cook
rekonet	to recognize
kwe	to believe
ba/bay/ban	to give
tire	to shoot
kite	to leave/let
sanble	to look like
vizite	to visit
rakonte	to tell
eseye	to try
suiv	to follow
mande	to ask
reponn	to answer
bezwen	to need
ri	to laugh
komanse	to start
swe	to sweat

Day 7 (cont.)

janbe	to cross
souri	to smile
ede	to help
geri	to heal
mouri	to die
peye	to pay
pwomet	to promise
penyen	to bathe
fini	to stop/to end
voye	to send
-jwe "Charades"	-play "Charades"
devwa: praktike jwe "Charades"	homework: practice playing "Charades"

Day 8

-introductions

-discussed the educational system and grades in the United States

kolor yo:	the colors:
ble	blue
jon	yellow
blan	white
mawon	brown
nwa	black
gri	grey
rouj	red
woz	pink
vet	green
vyolet	purple

rad yo:	clothing:
rob	dress
kosaj	blouse
jip	skirt
chemiz	shirt
pantalon	pants
soulye	shoes
sapat	sandals
sentiron	belt
pa gen devwa aswa	no homework tonight

Day 9

- introductions

-discussed laws in the United States (i.e. driver's liscense)

-discussed/compared costs of living and wages in North America vs. Haiti

kek prepasisyon yo:	some prepositions:
sou	on
devan	in front of
anba	under
deye	behind

Day 10

-dramatic presentation at school involving singing and dancing

-Party!